

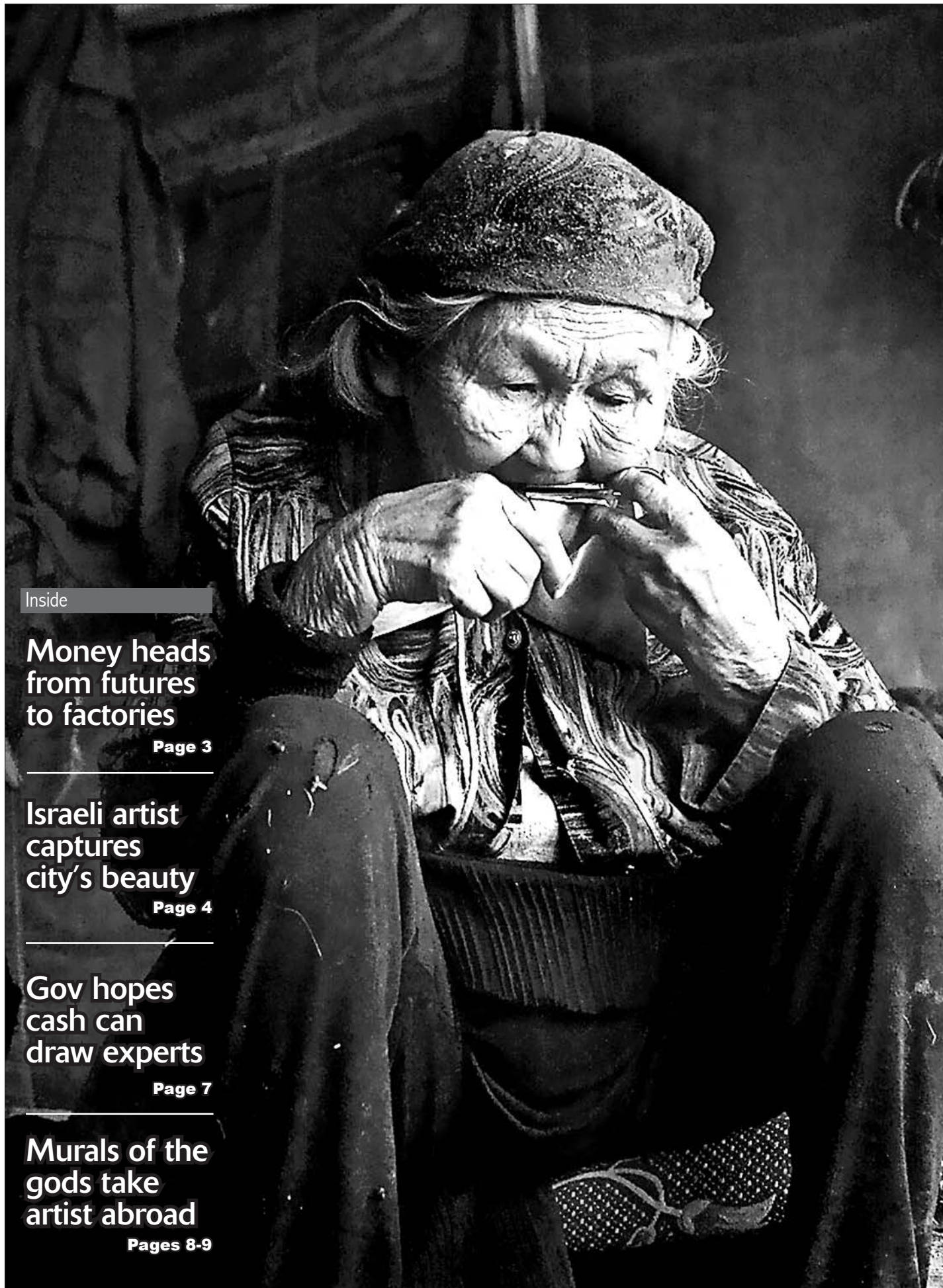


The last hunters

Twilight is upon the culture of the Evenks, China's semi-nomadic hunters of the northeast. Few have been able to adapt in the decade since the local government asked them to move out of the forests and into the cities. Many Evenks turned to alcohol abuse to cope with what they see as their new empty existence.

Director Gu Tao, 42, spent three years living with the Aoluguya Evenks and recording their struggles in *Aoluguya*, *Aoluguya*, winner of the golden prize for Best Nature Documentary at the 2010 Magnolia International Documentary Awards,

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Speed boost planned for capital's Internet



China Telecom and China Unicom said they will increase Internet access speeds for customers in Beijing by the end of this year.

CFP Photo

By Wang Xudong

The Ministry of Industry and Information Technology announced this week that the country will begin researching and improving core technologies to begin building an "Internet of Things" by 2015.

"Broadband China," as its back end has been dubbed by the State Council, could become a national strategy starting this year, said Miao Xu, the ministry's spokesperson.

"Improving our broadband network is just as important as improving our road and rail networks," he said.

The first step will be a network overhaul to pave the way for faster speeds, Ministry of Communication Development Division Deputy Director Chen Jiachun said.

Data released at the end of January by Akamai, the world's largest content delivery network, found that worldwide network speeds averaged 2.7 megabits per second (Mbps). South Korea had the fastest network, with average speeds of 16.7 Mbps. China placed 90th with speeds of 1.5Mbps.

"Most foreigners never experienced poor Internet access before coming to China," said Keisuke Katori, a Japanese student at Renmin University of China. "I think Chinese Internet users' affinity for online

games and streaming media places a huge burden on the network."

The cost of such slow access has been equally criticized.

Internet users in the capital pay an average of 82 yuan per month — 468 times more than users in Hong Kong and three times more than users in the US, according to a report by the Data Center of China Internet (DCCI).

"Beijing is one of the most expensive places for broadband access," said Li Kankai, professor of Beijing University of Post and Telecommunications.

The DCCI report also found that actual network speeds were significantly lower than advertised by service providers.

"In my hometown in Jiangsu, our Internet provider charges 130 yuan per month ... but my connection still runs like a snail. I can't imagine what a 20 Mbps connection must actually be like," said Wang Tianhua, who has been working in Beijing for five years.

Currently, the government and China Unicom are working on a project to enhance network speeds and bring 20 Mbps connections to many parts of the capital.

Some parts of the city have already received a speed boost, bumping 1 Mbps connections to 2 Mbps and 2 Mbps connections to 10 Mbps.

Some analysts said China Unicom may have been pushed to begin improving its network to fight China Telecom's longstanding domination of Internet access in the capital. However, China Telecom is planning a similar project to boost access speeds for its customers and remain competitive.

Competition between the two providers has done little to slow rumors of a monopoly.

Many communities prevent their residents from having a choice of service provider by signing long-term exclusive contracts that prevent entire neighborhoods from choosing an alternative Internet service provider.

"We are treated unfairly because we have no choice. We are forced to pay whatever they ask, and they have no incentive to ensure the network is well maintained," said Xiang Ligang, a local resident.

Last year, the National Development and Reform Committee (NDRC) began investigating the companies for a potential violation of the nation's antitrust laws. The results of the investigation have not been announced.

The number of broadband users in China reached about 155 million last November, making the country one of the largest Internet markets in the world.

Related

Wi-Fi access available on city's buses

The capital is set to upgrade its Wi-Fi network to cover public transportation services by the end of March.

He Ning, the general manager of China Mobile Group, said they are now testing the technology on 60 buses on Second Ring Road.

He said the company is troubleshooting signal stability, as the stability could be influenced by bumps and jolts when the bus is in motion.

The technology is expected to be installed at bus stations afterwards.

Upgrading the city's mobile service to 4G will combine the existing 3G service with Wi-Fi, and will include Bluetooth as well as satellite data.

The service is promised to be free by 2014; however, using it comes with restrictions, according to Xinhua.

Users must register with their

mobile phone number to get a password to access the service.

Last year, Beijing began offering free Wi-Fi across seven of the city's districts, including Xidan and Zhongguancun.

However, according to a latest survey, only Guomao and Zhongguancun, the business and technology hubs of the city, could receive signals.

(By Huang Daohen)

Brief

City's divorce rate drops to 8-year low

A recent report from the Beijing Municipal Civil Affairs Bureau showed that Beijing's divorce rate fell to an eight-year low in 2011.

Last year, the city handled a total of 234,723 marriage-related cases, among which there were 173,657 new marriages, 32,998 divorces, 28,068 replacement marriage certificates and 377 registered adoptions.

Defining 'white collar'

How much money does someone need to be considered a "white-collar worker"?

Netizens have weighed in with an answer: an income of more than 20,000 yuan per month, a car worth more than 150,000 yuan and ownership of two domiciles.

In addition, such workers are assumed to have fixed working hours that leave them free to exercise and pursue their own interests.

However, many considered the qualifications "too strict."

"I don't meet any of these requirements. These are not the requirements to be considered a white-collar worker — they are the requirements for managing a mistress!" one netizen said.

"When I earned 3,000 yuan per month, the standard was 10,000 yuan. Now that I earn 10,000 yuan per month, the standard is 20,000 yuan. I'll never get there," another netizen said.

According to an online poll conducted by Tencent, China's largest Internet company by market share, more than 6 percent of Internet users earn at least 20,000 yuan per month; 13 percent work fixed hours.

A man living in Shanghai said that although he earned 10,000 yuan per month, a meal at KFC was still beyond his means. "I earn 10,000 yuan every month, but after the bills are paid I have only 1,000 yuan left," he said.

Public ads target lewdness on Valentine's

More than 500 billboards deriding those who have extramarital affairs were posted in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province for Valentine's Day.

Some read, "Lewdness is the worst of all vices, and filial piety is the best of all virtues," others that "Chastity is the best dowry a girl can have."

The campaign's founder, Xia Haixin, runs HaoNGO.com, a non-profit website promoting healthy family life. She said she knew the ads would be controversial, but hoped they would raise the moral standards of the community.

Most of the billboards were put by bus stops near local colleges and media outlets. Xia said the locations were chosen for maximum impact.

The ads were funded by donations from female Internet users. Xia said she recently received another 60,000 yuan, which she plans to use to expand the campaign nationwide.

(Agencies)

Back to 'real economy'

Coastal entrepreneurs leave speculation for production



A woman works in a garment factory in Huaibei, Anhui Province. Banks are being urged to support such manufacturing centers across the country. Xie Zhengyi/IC Photo

Ji Guomiao has been busily recruiting factory workers for the past week in hopes of returning his textile machines to peak output.

As the board chairman of Huatong Color Spun, based in the city of Shaoxing in Zhejiang Province, Ji has spent more than 1 billion yuan to develop and patent new hemp-fiber products.

This wouldn't have been an option three years ago, when Ji was pumping his wealth into cotton futures.

When a sharp downturn in the market cost Ji 50 million yuan in 2011, he decided it was time to return to the manufacturing industry.

Today, Ji's textile enterprise is one of many businesses along the southeastern coast that have responded to the central government's call to develop the nation's real economy.

According to a statement released at an annual central economic work conference held last December, the country will take a firm hold of real economic development and create a social atmosphere that encourages acquiring wealth through entrepreneurship.

"Real economy" refers to the part of the economy associated with the actual production of goods and services, including agriculture, manufacturing and service trades. It is regarded as the foundation of a country's comprehensive strength and the material basis of people's livelihood, according to economic analysts.

The real economy, especially the manufacturing sector, is key to Zhejiang's economic transformation and development and an important force for scientific innovation, said Zhao Hongzhu, secretary of the Zhejiang Provincial committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Zhao urged enterprises to optimize resource allocation and form a real economy cluster.

Coastal private businesses, which have been faced with financing problems, high interest rates and a more competitive market in recent years, have been struggling to make ends meet. When business became tough, many entrepreneurs turned to speculating in stocks,

futures and real estate.

Others, such as many residents of Wenzhou, invest in the informal lending market, which promises higher returns than other investments.

However, this type of lending comes at a price. More than 90 heads of private companies in the city are reported to have disappeared, committed suicide or declared bankruptcy – dodging their debts worth about 10 billion yuan – in 2011.

Entrepreneurs said they are willing to embrace the real economy and tackle the problems they are currently facing.

"We should focus on scientific innovation and add value to our products to make greater profits," said Zong Qinghou, board chairman of the Wahaha Group, the country's top beverage company.

Zong said if enterprises are well-operated, the burden of high taxes and fees will not stop their development.

Some have asked for further government support for private enterprises. (Xinhua)

Market watch

Private financing behind industries' dilemma

By Huang Daohen

Mao Yu, a local office worker in Shenyang, Liaoning Province, withdrew \$10,000 (63,000 yuan) from a state-owned bank on January 20.

But that money was not meant for a Spring Festival splurge. Instead, Mao immediately deposited it in a branch of the South Korean Hana Bank.

"The Korean bank offers a much higher annual interest rate of 3 percent on US dollar deposits," Mao said.

Many residents of Shenyang have converted their yuan savings into US dollar deposits in foreign banks to cash in on superior interest rates, Xinhua reported.

That explains the boom in foreign banks across the north.

Since 2006, as many as eight non-local and foreign banks have settled in Liaoning, an old industrial province whose economic output once topped

the country.

However, the northeastern provinces of Heilongjiang, Jinlin and Liaoning made little use of the growth potential offered by these banks.

"You can imagine it like a chef sitting at a table of rare ingredients yet unable to make a single delicacy," said Wen Yijun, analyst and researcher with Oriental Securities in Beijing.

That also happened in Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, whose private economy has been growing for decades.

Last year, the city known for its self-made millionaires became embroiled in a lending crisis.

"Capital financing has been very active in the country. We should realize that if we cannot deal with the changing situation, economic growth may come at the cost of people becoming bond servants in exchange for financial backing," Wen said.

In a trial program, the local government in Wenzhou submitted a proposal to regulate private financing in the city. The plan aims to build Wenzhou into a pilot zone for financial reform and innovation, build quality financing services directed to small- and medium-sized enterprises, Xinhua reported.

The central government has already given its approval. Premier Wen Jianbao recently called on banks to improve financial services for the country's real economy, especially for small businesses and those engaged in agriculture.

The country's economic transition and restructuring have set higher requirements for the financial sector, Wen said.

"Further support for small and micro enterprises is crucial, as they are still facing great operating pressures, rising costs and financing difficulties," he said.

Brief

Japanese phone makers plan their return

Japanese mobile phone manufacturer Kyocera is considering making a return to the Chinese market later this week after withdrawing from the country three years ago, *Beijing Business* reported.

Kyocera's 2008 withdrawal was spurred by pressure from rising costs and shrinking market share. Yet as China's domestic smartphone market enters a period of high growth, several Japanese manufacturers, including Kyocera, Sony and Sharp, are preparing to return.

Some experts say the first step for Kyocera's return to China would be to team up with China's domestic mobile phone operators. Kyocera plans to launch a 3G smartphone customized for China Telecom, the KSP8000, later this week.

The device will be sold by China National Postal and Telecommunications Appliances Corporation, and will receive a terminal subsidy from China Telecom after its launch. It will also be sold by China Telecom and through social channels.

Kyocera said that it will launch new models and formulate strategies to expand in China if the new phone's sales reach its targets.

The return of Japanese mobile phone producers to China has been motivated by the country's massive smartphone market. In the fourth quarter of 2011, 22.83 million smartphones were sold in China, representing year-on-year growth of 79.6 percent.

Chinese smartphone users grew to 223 million, accounting for 23.2 percent of all mobile phone users in the country.

Coach to accelerate expansion

After excellent sales in 2011, luxury goods brand Coach is looking to expand its presence in the country.

The company's sales in China reached \$188 million (1.84 billion yuan) in 2011, compared to \$108 million in 2010. Coach is expected to perform better this year, with projected sales of \$300 million, said Jonathan Seliger, CEO of Coach China.

As with sales, the number of Coach stores in China is also growing. As of 2011, the company was running 80 stores in the country, including 65 in the less developed interior provinces. Coach is expected to open 30 more stores this year, most of which will be inland.

While demand for luxury goods in China has expanded dramatically in recent years, international luxury brands have seen slow growth since the fourth quarter of 2011.

Nevertheless, Victor Luis, head of Coach's international retail business department, said the company will stick to its plan of expanding in China. The country will account for about 20 percent of global luxury market by 2016, Luis said, adding that Coach has fewer Chinese stores than many other brands.

(Agencies)

Israeli artist paints the beauty and sorrow of urban Beijing



Fortunee Noel

Photo by Wu Hao

By Wu Hao

Fortunee Noel, a Beijing-based Israeli painter, witnessed the best and worst of Beijing's transformation: hutong houses were knocked down, destroying generations of living memory, while high-rises shot toward the sky, offering promises of new opportunities.

And all the while, she painted on Plexiglas, the perfect symbol of the modern city.

As one of a series of events marking the 20th anniversary of China-Israel diplomatic relations, the exhibition "Splendid With No Regrets" was held at Babu Space in Sanlitun Village – Noel's first solo show since giving birth in 2008.

Among the attendees was Piao Jinhai, owner of Babu, who said Noel's sensitivity and striving for perfection is reflected in her works. She would check every detail of the exhibition, Piao said. If a frame was slightly cracked, she'd have it redone; if she felt the light struck her works at an odd angle, she'd make sure it was fixed.

"I knew that I'd be a painter," Noel said, citing her father's influence.

Noel came to China six years ago with her boyfriend, hoping to escape the second intifada in Israel.

"Every day we heard about China becoming the new El Dorado, so we decided to forget the Middle East for a while and travel to China to find out for ourselves," she said. "And this is the new El Dorado!"



A painting about Beijing's hutong
Photo provided by Babu Space

Impressed by "the size of the city, the dynamism, the energy and the people that always work," Noel began painting Beijing's urban landscape in the same way that she paints other cities: she tries to convey their energy.

"Energy" is Noel's newest theme. The spirals in her works were inspired by telegraph coils, which in Noel's eyes represent the energy of a city's development and its society, caught up in a whirl.

She is particularly obsessed with painting skyscrapers and hutong houses.

To her, unlike the Summer Palace or Forbidden City, hutong are much more attractive because "people live there." Residents give vitality to these historical buildings.

"The hutong cannot be torn down, as they are symbol," said Ran Mengxi, a local who has been living in a hutong for two decades. "It's peculiar to Beijing. People who live there are quite intimate and friendly with one another."

"Some hutong are messy and outdated, and renovations have to be made," Piao said.

For Noel, the hutong are still vibrant and colorful, just like the modern buildings that rise up behind them.

"All her works look colorful and harmonious, making people feel comfortable," Piao said. "That's something I'm seeking. I don't care whether or not there is something profound behind the painting."

"A customer came yesterday with his whole family just to decide which picture they should buy – they fell in love with two hutong pieces."

"I don't believe in the moral impact of art," Noel said. "It's always a matter of aesthetics. Even when you want to denounce a situation, [a good work] tends to make it beautiful."

Noel is reluctant to offer a judgment on the disappearance of wide swathes of Beijing's hutong. She doesn't want to criticize; rather, through art, she just wants to record the development of the city's landscape.

It's a matter of aesthetics, as the artist points out.

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European leaders urge confidence in euro at exhibition

By Wu Tong

European leaders expressed faith in the relationship between China and Europe at the opening ceremony of the Euro Exhibition on Wednesday, stressing the necessity of cooperation between the two economies and their determination to revive the euro.

Herman Van Rompuy, the European Council president, said no economy can address its problem in isolation.

"Europe and China share a wish to live in a multi-polar world, a world which is united in diversity, where we work together to find global solutions," Rompuy said. "The key word for the EU and China relationship is cooperation, not rivalry."

The two places' economic bond is tighter than ever, as Europe is China's largest trade partner. Many of the challenges they face are similar.

"We both live in a world that is not dominated by one currency alone. And that is why the currency for Europe is also vital for you, too," Rompuy said.

He also emphasized that though some European countries are stagnating in the debt crisis, the EU is taking a step-by-step approach to enhance its financial position and perfect its mechanism.

Jose Manuel Barroso, the European Commission president, also expressed his confidence in the euro's revival.

"In fact, the euro is more than a currency. It is a symbol of European economic and political integration," Barroso said.



Leaders from China and Europe stressing their determination to revive the euro at the opening ceremony of the Euro Exhibition.

Photo by Wu Tong

He said he believes Europe will integrate further in the future. "The future of the euro and European integration is inseparable," he said.

The governor of the People's Bank of China, Zhou Xiaochuan, also expressed his confidence.

He reiterated that China will not cut the euro's share in its foreign reserve. The Chinese government is willing to encourage domestic enterprises to make outbound investments. The International Monetary Fund and European Financial Stability

Fund will work to solve the European debt crisis, he said.

Zhou said that the People's Bank of China will not lose confidence in the euro.

He also said that China has always believed Europe will improve its overall economy. BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) will actively help European countries solve the problem, he said.

Last year the Euro Exhibition was held at Sichuan University, Xiamen University and Sun Yat-sen University, aiming to introduce the history of the EU, the euro and

the financial crisis to Chinese students. This year's exhibition began at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

Students showed great interest and concern in the current euro condition. Asked about the fiscal union supported by Germany and the European Central Bank, Rompuy reaffirmed the importance of the mechanism.

He said Europe has established several new mechanisms in the past few years, including surveillance and rescue mechanisms to correct both the fiscal

and financial imbalance.

"It was hard work because we had to do this in the middle of a storm," he said. "By the end of January this year, we agreed on a new treaty echoing the balance budget in our constitutions. We also agreed to donate not only the 17 countries of the euro zone but also others as a gesture of solidarity."

He stressed that all European countries are in the same boat.

Rompuy will continue to discuss fiscal and financial issues with Chinese leaders during his trip.

Indian Embassy gets new home in Beijing

By Han Manman

The Indian Embassy in China recently moved to a new home near Liangmaqiao, close to the American and Israeli embassies, after 42 years in a cramped building near Ritan Park.

The 13,500-square-meter, \$10 million compound, made of sandstone and other materials imported from India, brings all the offices of the Indian embassy under one roof. Designed by Indian architect Raj Rewal, the building also houses a cultural complex and a 100-seat auditorium.

According to *The Hindu*, the building, which was scheduled to open in 2010, had to undergo a half-year-long secu-



The new Indian Embassy

Photo provided by China.com.cn

city review in the wake of concerns expressed by some officials over inadequate security arrangements following the 2009 attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul.

The new embassy was

designed to address the growing demands of a fast-expanding bilateral relationship, said S. Jaishankar, Indian ambassador to China.

The old two-storey wooden embassy occupied by Indian offi-

cials since 1969, which India acquired on a 99-year lease and is still where the ambassador currently lives, will be used for other activities, Jaishankar said.

Indian external affairs minister Shri S.M. Krishna and Chinese vice foreign minister Cheng Guoping jointly opened the new embassy building last Wednesday.

In his speech marking the building's inauguration, Krishna said the new embassy symbolizes a new era in relations between India and China.

"A modern and expansive Chancery clearly reflects our expectations of ties with China," the ambassador said. "India and China have age-old ties and history is replete with examples

of how we have not only influenced each other, but assisted each other's development."

"As the only two nations with a population of more than a billion, the foremost priority for both of us is to raise the quality of life of our people. A stronger India-China economic relationship can make a direct contribution to that goal," he said.

This is the second time the Indian embassy has changed locations. Before 1969 the embassy was in the foreign legation quarter near Tian'anmen Square. It was damaged during the Cultural Revolution, after which many embassies moved to designated diplomatic enclaves in the city.

Two lit festivals to kick off in Beijing

By Han Manman

Beginning at the end of this month, Beijing will be awash in words, with two literary festivals bringing a slew of writers, poets and intellectuals to town.

Tickets are on sale for Capital M's Capital Literary Festival 2012, which kicks off on February 25, a week before the Bookworm's popular festival.

Tina Kanagaratnam, Capital Literary Festival co-organizer, said the weeklong festival will feature 29 speakers and 21 events. She said the festival will also boast an intriguing mix of poets, nonfiction writers and serious academics.

Here are some highlight events: on February 25, Harold McGee and Cheryl Tan will discuss food in a talk titled "The Curious Cook"; on March 1, Jeff Fuchs will share his experience of trekking being the only Westerner to trek the full Tea Horse Trail; and photographers Shahidul Alam, Lois Connor, Rosa Maria Falvo and Jiang Jian will discuss the camera's role in social engagement on March 4.

The very popular *Financial Times* debate will return on March 3, and the next day, a panel of foreign journalists will discuss working in China.

People can buy tickets (65 yuan, includes a drink; 20 yuan for children and students, also with drink) at Capital M or Mypiao.com.

A bigger festival, the Bookworm International Literary Festival, begins March 9 and runs until March 23.

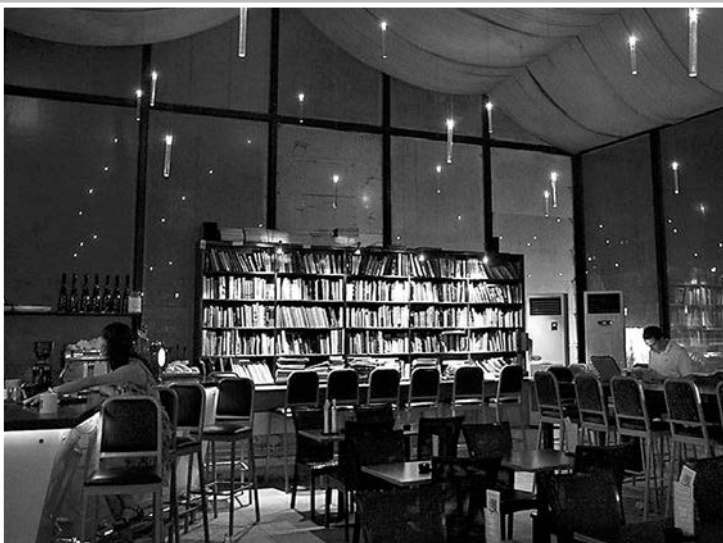
This year's festival will include 100 events over three cities: Beijing, Suzhou and Chengdu. More than 70 Chinese and international writers and thinkers will take part.

Highlights include: on March 10, Jonathan Fenby, former editor of *The Observer* and *South China Morning Post* and a renowned China historian, will talk about his latest book, *Tiger Head, Snake Tails: China Today*.

On March 10, Israeli author AB Yehoshua will discuss his latest novel, *Friendly Fire*, in which a widower is haunted by his son's death on the West Bank. His talk promises to raise hard questions about the meaning of Judaism and the Middle East problem.

For something more off the beaten path, on March 19, British poet and author Tim Clare will discuss his painfully honest stand-up comedy show, "Death Drive." It received four stars at Edinburgh's The List when it played at the Edinburgh International Festival last year.

Tickets to Bookworm events are available exclusively at the Bookworm from 9 am until 9 pm daily. Many events are expected to sell out. You can check the status events from its website, bookwormfestival.com, or call the festival hotline at 13717620144.



The Bookworm International Literary Festival will include 100 events with more than 70 Chinese and international writers and thinkers.

Photos from The Bookworm

Event

Social networking evening

Bridges connect destinations and cross troubled waters; networking events connect islands and communities.

This networking event connects people looking for jobs with people looking for staff, people looking for career development options with potential mentors. The post-Spring Festival period is traditionally the time when many look for new employees but struggle to find the right person.

This event on Tuesday, February 21 solves that problem by providing a platform for people to find candidates and employers. Available positions and company information will be prominently displayed.

Where: Zeta Bar, Hilton Beijing, 1 Dong Fang Road, North Dong Sanhuan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: February 21, 6:30-10:30 p.m.

Tel: 18611844288

Cost: Free

Pediatric first aid

Due to high demand, International SOS is planning this event a second time. In this seminar, Dr. Mijke Vankan, International SOS ER and family physician, will present an overview of first aid for children. Parents and caregivers will receive practical advice on how to manage illness and treat injuries when they happen, until professional help is available. This seminar will cover topics including poisoning, burns, head injuries, broken bones, nosebleeds, choking, bites and stings and fever.

Limited seating is available, and registration is upon confirmation only: seminar@internationalsos.com

Where: Suite 105, Wing 1, Kunsha Building, 16 Xinyuan Li, Chaoyang District

When: February 22, 10-11:30 a.m.

Tel: Clinic: 6462 9112, 24-hr hotline: 6462 9100

Cost: Free

Beijing Playhouse audition for actors

Oklahoma!, the Broadway musical, is coming to China. Featuring such classic songs as "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," "Surrey with the Fringe on the Top" and "Kansas City," this amazing musical will have your hearts singing. Rodgers and Hammerstein's most famous showstopper set the standards and established the rules of musical theater. The high-spirited rivalry between the local farmers and cowboys provides colorful background as they sing and dance their love story.

The musical will feature 30 singers and dancers and a crew of at least 80. All 30 roles are open. Ability to perform in English is required, but English doesn't have to be a native language.

Where: Performances and auditions are at Mako Theater in Shuangjing, just south of Guomao. Rehearsals are at BUCT, a 10-minute walk from the Huixing Xijie Nankou subway station.

Audition dates: Sunday, February 26 and Monday, February 27 at 6:30 pm

Email:

performance@beijingplayhouse.com

Tel: 13718908922

Cost: Free

(By Han Manman)

Foreigners get chance to claim millions in subsidies

By Wu Tong

The Beijing Administration of Human Resources and Social Security kicked off the second and third round of applications for its foreign experts program Monday, aiming to draw more high-skilled foreigners to work in the city.

The program plans to provide 1 million yuan in subsidies for each expert, with a maximum of 5 million yuan in extra funding for scientific research.

Three-year working experience in China

The program is targeting foreigners who have worked in China for nine months per year over the last three years. Applicants should possess a doctorate degree from a foreign university and meet at least one of the following requirements.

- Worked as a professor at a prestigious foreign university or research institute
- Worked as a high-ranking technological or managerial



The capital is willing to pay a premium for highly-skilled experts. CFP Photo

expert at a prestigious international corporation or financial institution

- Owns independent intellectual property or core technology and has entrepreneurial experience; well-connected with experts in relevant fields

- Meets the urgent needs of the Chinese government
- Arts and social sciences were not included in these two rounds of recruitment.

Age limit increased to 65

In the past, the human resources and social security bureau limited applicants with a maximum age of 55, but that has been increased to 65 this year.

The first round of recruitment began last November. Deadlines for the second and third rounds are the end of this month and June 20.

Employers involved in the program are domestic

non-foreign-owned enterprises. Accepted applicants need to sign a contract with the employer.

Applicants are allowed to apply for the program only twice.

One-time subsidy reaches 1 million yuan

Approved experts will be offered a one-time subsidy of 1 million yuan. According to their working conditions, more subsidies can be given through their employers, ranging from 3 to 5 million yuan.

Experts will also receive special treatment regarding exit-entry, housing, insurance and taxes. The title National Special Expert will be offered.

The Beijing Administration of Human Resources and Social Security

Foreign Policy Department

Where: 5 Yongdingmen Xijie, Xuanwu District

Open: 9 am – 5 pm

Tel: 6318 2700

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiying@ynet.com

I'm getting my visa renewed but have to go to Shanghai soon for business. Do I need to bring my passport or just use the number to buy train tickets?

Bringing a photocopy of your passport should work at the counters of the railway station. When you turn in your passport for visa renewal, the bureau should give you a certificate that clarifies your ID situation – very helpful when traveling in China!

I'm new in Beijing and I need a car and a driver who speaks English. I've found some agencies, but their services are all too expensive. Any recommendations?

Plenty of taxi drivers like to take on a long-term customer with a regular schedule. We suggest taking lots of taxis and just asking around. As for the English: some cabbies are better at it than you might expect.

Hey there. I recall my landlord gave me a gas card when I first moved in, but I seem to have lost it. Although I don't cook much, I still want to figure out how to get a new gas card to refill the gas in my kitchen if necessary.

Better call your landlord and ask for assistance. Normally, you need to know the name of your gas company, which your landlord or the apartment property management office should have on file. Go to the gas company and ask them to issue you a new card. You need to bring your passport, a copy of your landlord's ID, a copy of the leasing agreement and 22.5 yuan.

I'm a foreigner who would like to have a Chinese roommate so I can practice my Chinese. Where can I find a good one? I try English-language websites, but all I find are posts that seek "cute, friendly and wanting to make friends."

The majority of Chinese find apartments and roommates through Chinese sites. The most popular ones are ganji.com and 58.com. The sites are in Chinese only. Most young Chinese use QQ, so you might consider signing up for an account.

(By Wei Ying)

Strawberry Symposium begins Sunday

By Annie Wei

The Strawberry Symposium has been held for the last six years, but this year the event – which begins Sunday – will open to the public along with researchers, academics and salespeople.

The Seventh International Strawberry Symposium will be from February 18 to 22 in Changping District. Apart from viewing rows upon rows of strawberries hanging from 3-meter-high walls, visitors can view 135 types of strawberry species from around the world, or learn how to plant strawberries and make cakes.

Where: Xiyuan, Modern Agricultural Technique Demonstration Area, Xiaotangshan, Changping District

How to get there: Take Subway Line 5 and get off at Tiantongyuan Bei Yuan station, then take Bus 537 or 59 to Xiangtun stop

Open: 8 am – 5 pm

Tel: 6179 5162

Cost: 60 yuan

Website: iss2012bjchina.org



The strawberries at the symposium sell for 150 yuan per 500 grams.

CFP Photo



Wen Na at work

Murals of You



A mural Wen painted in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi Province

By Huang Daohen

China's young artists are often cast as members of a generation: self-centered, a generation of trendsetters and producers of trendy art.

However, Wen Na, who started painting in 1980, is focusing on a more traditional: Buddhist and ancient deities.

For Wen, painting is a form of self-expression – it's about her.



Wen Na's mural at an art gallery near Milan, Italy

Many say being a young artist is a complicated business. Those who hope to find success have to be as skilled at marketing as they do at communication.

For those who think inducing commentary and earning money are the sole purposes of art, Wen Na, whose real name is Chen Xingxing, may appear to come up short.

"I have no specific plans nor a strong desire to achieve anything," the young painter said while at a restaurant in Nanluogu Xiang. "Sometimes, I think I'm just lucky to have people both home and abroad who appreciate my work and invite me to do what I enjoy."

That explains why Wen hasn't held a solo exhibition: most of her works, paintings of a staggering number of gods

and spirits, are scattered about on walls the world over.

Wen was born into a family of artists in Beijing. Her parents, both artists, sent her to study painting in the hopes that she would become great.

It was at the Central Academy of Fine Arts that she took an interest in animation. *People of Little Face*, a series of more than 300 paintings, was Wen's favorite.

"Every painting had a character, such as the little face girl who traveled the world," Wen said. She saw in herself a desire to be like the character.

But stronger was Wen's attraction to traditional elements. "Sometimes, the feeling is so strong that if I see an old building, design or mythological figure, I can't help

wanting to paint it," she said.

The impulse grew into Wen's latest style, which prominently features Buddha and other Chinese deities. Some are drawn from traditional mythology and others are Wen's creations.

However, the idea to paint her characters on walls came about by happenstance. In 2010, Wen ran across a local art festival during her shortstay in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi Province. The hosts, after learning Wen was a painter, invited her to attend the exhibition.

With no ready-made works in hand, Wen brought along a marker and asked for a clean wall on the site. She then drew her first mural.

Illustrations for the fantasy novel *Ghost Blows Out the Light*

Q: When did you decide to become an artist?

A: My parents both work in art, and they are the source of both my strengths and shortcomings. I had no choice in this matter.

If you ask me why I decided to learn to draw, I would have to answer that God gave me an opportunity to choose. When I was young, I was also fond of astronomy and archeology, but I gradually saw those weren't meant for me. After I took a painting class in junior high, I decided I wanted to go on to the Central Academy of Fine Arts.

Q: How long it took to paint a mural?

A: I seldom do rough sketches. I have a basic idea in mind before I start working. A marker drawing usually takes me an hour, while a wall drawing usually takes a day.

Most murals are simple. I usually have no idea what I want to paint like when I start. What I want to paint will be a complete piece. A wall drawing usually takes a day, while a wall drawing usually takes three days.

f the gods

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The improvised mural astonished visitors from home and abroad, and many told Wen they would like to have similar art on their own walls.

Wen then started her journey to paint walls around the world.

"It suddenly felt like I was traveling in the name of painting," she said.

But traveling isn't Wen's whole life; friends are.

"The word friend means a lot to me," Wen said. "Though I may go through every day with no plans for my future, it's my friends who help me when I'm in trouble."

Finding a fixed place to meet those friends has been hard. That's why Wen leased her small downtown apartment

and used the money to rent a 150-square-meter studio in Songzhuang, the country's most famous artist community, on the east side of the capital.

The studio, Wen Na's Dining Hall, reflects an alternative living and working style: she has a four-meter-high work area with a basketball court and a complex geometric bedroom, kitchen and toilet.

Wen, together with three of her friends, all young artists, use the area to work, live and hang out.

"Wen Na's Dining Hall is our living room as well as our den and exhibition space," she said.

Lesley Bu, director of Gongyuan Gallery, which focuses on the work of young artists, is optimistic about the future

of Songzhuang.

"When compared with previous generations, these young artists have more opportunities," Bu said. "They experience more and face bigger temptations. They have more to think about."

Bu said the young artists, especially those born in the 1980s, care less about their reputation.

"Many of them think with their heart and create works that they themselves find interesting," Bu said. While many critics consider that "selfish," Bu sees the trend as a positive for Chinese art. "Maybe selfishness is bad in society at large, but in artists it can be a tool to explore and develop their true feelings," she said.

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Though I can paint quickly, I have a hard time maintaining my focus. When I say I can complete a painting within an hour, that doesn't mean I can do eight paintings a day.

Q: Are there any requirements when you choose a wall for your murals?

A: No, as long as the wall is clean and suitable for painting.

Most walls I've painted on were not built for murals. Sometimes, I need to find the right wall in the building in order to make the construction more coordinated. The process of choosing can be fun in itself.



Photos provided by Wen Na

Brush strokes without borders

By Charles Zhu

By his ink paintings of elegant southern women and rich dabs of color, it's easy to guess that painter Xu Huiquan is a southerner who has a boundless love for the region's picturesque water towns and white-walled, black-roofed homes.



Xu Huiquan



Xu's ink paintings are portraits of elegant southern women.

Xu Huiquan, born in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, is one of the most prominent contemporary ink-and-brush painters who assimilate modern Western painting structure yet break from the conventional concepts of time and space.

In structure, Xu heeds the linear form and yet presses for moderate exaggeration to convey the gentleness, wisdom and beauty of southern women. His color, however, echoes the hues favored by classical European painters, dipping occasionally into the impressionist style to draw forth strong dabs of golden color that perfect his aesthetic structure.

In spite of these influences, Xu maintains the basic language of Chinese ink wash painting. The juxtaposition on *xuan* paper smacks of both the traditional and modern, and satisfies both cultural needs.

In his early years, Xu studied the freestyle ink figure paintings of such masters as Shi Tao, Ren Bonian and Wu Changshuo, and the style became his major while at the

Zhejiang Academy of Arts. After making significant achievements, he switched to *gongbi*, a more detail-oriented style. As a result, his current work excels by combining these painting languages.

Using his keen observations of life and poetic expression, Xu portrays southern women enjoying courtyard gardens, burning tea under pine trees, reading classical literature, composing poems or playing an instrument amidst a grove of flowers and trees. The painter portrays their shyness, joy and despondency as a result of the loss of and longing for love.

The pictures look realistic and yet imaginative in their exaggerations. The best examples of his style are such works as *May, Fragrant Breeze*, *Early Summer* and *The Springtime River and the Flowery Moon*.

Critics say his paintings that have a timeless and penetrative power like words of Tang and Song dynasty poets. Under Xu's brush, women become tender and gentle, pretty

yet pure, and so closely integrated with the springtime scenery of hills, rocks, flowers and trees as to penetrate the viewer's heart.

What is most striking is how each picture is conceived. The women in Xu's portraits can be judged less by their beauty than by the impression they give the viewer. One critic asked Xu whether the women he paints represented his wife. Xu said, "Some do, but not all."

In portraying mountain scenes, he relies on the techniques of Shi Tao and Wu Changshuo. The flowers and birds draw more from the freewheeling splashes of Huang Binhong and Song Dynasty painters.

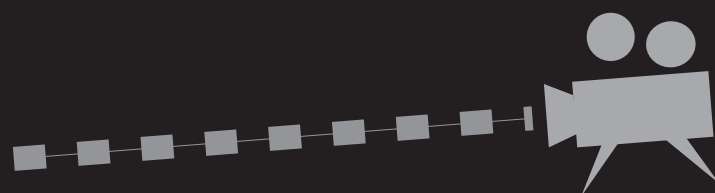
He applies few colors in his paintings, limiting himself to a palette of green, crimson and yellow to ensure the inks integrate in a complementary way.

Critics attribute Xu's brilliance to his perfect ink and brush technique and the profound aesthetic implications of his own style – an achievement to which few can claim.



“Who are we when we lost our roots?”

”



11

Indie film



Gu Tao

China's last hunters

By Niu Chen

Three hundred years ago, they emigrated from the Siberian taiga to northeastern China.

Fifty years ago, they were named “the Evenks.”

Today, these semi-nomadic hunters have been asked to leave their ancestral forests and into new settlements built by the local government. But many reject such modern trappings for a traditional life in their diminishing territory.

Gu Tao, 42, spent three years studying the identity-altering crisis facing the Aoluguya Evenks. *Aoluguya*, *Aoluguya*, his documentary, won the golden prize for Best Nature Documentary at the 2010 Magnolia International Documentary Awards.

The Aoluguya Evenks are an ethnic group concentrated in the Greater Khingan Range of northeastern China. For generations, they have lived with their reindeer as hunters and herdsman.

That nomadic lifestyle was shaken in 2003 when the government asked them to move into new settlements at the foot of the mountain in Genhe.

Although city life entitles the Evenks to medical care, education and other modern conveniences, few see these as perks when the price is their culture.

Many have left the government's settlement to return to new camps in the forest. But back in the forest, the Evenks face rapidly deteriorating living conditions.

Director Gu Tao followed the 42-year-old Liu Xia and her 38-year-old brother Wei Jia to learn about the forest camp.

Liu, like other Evenks, has a very intimate relationship with nature. She caresses reindeer and murmurs to dogs as though they were her children.

“My son and reindeer are the only reasons that I'm still living,” Liu says. Liu's husband died in a car accident, leaving her and their son Yu Guo alone. Liu lost custody of the boy due to the rampant alcohol abuse in her community and family.

For many Evenks, alcohol has become a sad substitute for hunting. Liu's brother, Wei, an aspiring oil painter, uses hard drinking as a way

to escape what he sees as a barren and meaningless existence.

In the forests, reindeer are essential to the Evenk life. Evenk hunters live teepee-like tents and make tools in household utensils from their immediate surroundings.

When they locate a new place with abundant resources, they move their camp and use their reindeer to help carry any goods that can't be left behind.

Antlers account for most of the Evenks' income.

In 2008, they harvested 200,000 yuan worth of antlers, according to a report by Xinhua News Agency. In the film, He Xie, son of the tribe's chief, removes a reindeer's antlers after giving it an anesthetic and bandaging the wound.

While the Aoluguya Evenks follow strict rules to live in harmony with nature – killing only old and weak animals and sparing all females – poachers follow no such order. Animal populations throughout the northeastern forests are falling, and with them the Evenks' chance of continuing their traditions.

“In the past, we could easily sustain our life in the mountains. Today, we have to haul food from the towns to our camp,” said He Xie's aunt during her visit to the forest camp.

Gu said the scene that touched him the most was the ending. When He Xie and his fellow Evenks visit the graves of their deceased family members, Liu mutters that she is ashamed that their culture of hunting died with



Maria Suo, the tribe's chief, feels helpless about the death of the Evenki hunting culture.



Liu Xia lost custody of her son due to alcohol abuse.



her generation. Gu likened it to the last screams of a dying culture.

The film inspired many travelers to visit the Aoluguya. Some came back with opposing conclusions. Landiao Gonghe, a popular blogger, said that many young Aoluguya Evenks – especially those born in the 1980s – prefer life in the city. He also said that the fragile state of the mountain forests make the Evenks' traditional life unsustainable.

“Everyone has a different angle. I only aimed to record their culture and their struggle,” Gu said.

Gu was born in Hulunbuir, Inner Mongolia. He graduated from an art college in 1995 with a degree in oil painting and began studying photography in Beijing in 2000.

He was inspired to make the film by his father, Gu Deqin, a photographer who recorded the Aoluguya Evenks' life in pictures and writing.

“I was stunned by their traditional way of life when I first arrived,” Gu Tao said. “That was why I wanted to film them.”

Gu spent several months each year living with the Aoluguya Evenks from 2005 to 2008 to learn about their culture and their struggle. His focus remains on the ethnic minorities of northeastern China, including the Mongols and the Oroqens.

Reindeers play an important role in the lives of the Aoluguya Evenks.

Photos provided by Gu Tao

Shop safe and shop smart

By Annie Wei

Dishonest merchants seem to be springing up everywhere, but shoppers can still find original designs and authentic products through reliable channels. *Beijing Today* recommends the following places for those looking for skin-care products and trendy items.



Fresh skincare is known for its natural ingredients.



Group-shopping on Weibo

Although shopping on Taobao is convenient and saves money, one should be careful because there are many fake products. When it comes to skin care, fakes can be hazardous.

A group of women who follow local style icon Winnie Shi's Weibo account recently decided to buy quality brands from overseas and share the shipping cost. They're part of a growing trend.

Shi recommends Fresh, Kimia and Revita Lash. These brands are made from quality ingredients and not marketed in China.

Website: winnieshi.taobao.cn



Photos provided by Google.com



Environmentally friendly designer bag

Local designer Wei Minghui, known for his brand Neicun, which makes items out of recycled materials, is releasing his new tote bags this month.

The new bags come in two sizes. A 17-inch laptop case costs 490 yuan and a 14-inch case costs 390 yuan. They are both made of recycled materials Wei collected from recycling stations, and each one's pattern is unique. The bags come with leather handles.

Each of Wei's designs are limited editions – he creates only 200 to 240 of each. They are available at three stores.

UCCA store

Where: 4 Jiuxianqiao, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 5 pm

Tel: 5780 0215

BNC

Where: LG9A, B1, The Village North, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 8 pm

Tel: 6416 9045

Spoonhouse

Where: 211 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – 9 pm

Tel: 6400 6419



Designer Wei Minghui's new laptop bags, starting from 390 yuan

Photos provided by Wei Minghui



Swarovski necklace



Givenchy clutch

Florists

Colorful accessories and floral patterns seem destined to become the trends of this spring and summer.

After reviewing international brands' runway photos during Fashion Week, *Beijing Today* has found two stores worthy of attention.

Website: store.taobao.com/?shop_id=57866122
no1baobei.taobao.cn



Michael Steward heels

CFP Photos

Sumptuous dark chocolate for any occasion

By Annie Wei

Chocolate doesn't have to be just for Valentine's Day. The age-old confection contains anadamie, an ingredient that spurs the brain to release dopamine, a chemical that makes one happier.

High-quality chocolate contains 50 to 85 percent pure cocoa. Cocoa butter gives chocolate its silky texture, while cocoa powder gives it a slightly bitter taste, which is offset by the anadamie.

Weiyang Ye and his wife Seio Nomoto recently opened an online store, lotoscomehome.taobao.cn, that not only sells furniture designed by Ye, but also homemade chocolate in 12 flavors.

Ye is proud of his chocolate, especially since it is freshly made from raw materials, like Valrhona, manufactured in France. Valrhona chocolate is like grand cru champagne to sparkling wines. Valrhona has reliable quality control, from cocoa tree-planting to end production.

Ye said a well-established chocolate manufacturer like Valrhona will

select quality cocoa beans, finely grind them and process them to produce high-quality chocolate. There are too few of these type of manufacturers on the market, he said, who use unqualified oil and sugar.

The Noisette, a silky and milky dark chocolate with a smooth nut flavor and topped with a hint of sea salt, is especially good. Also try the Framboise, a sticky raspberry jam-filled heart covered with dark chocolate. Different flavors of ganache and voluptuous chocolate truffles are available with Remy Martin, Courvoisier Napoleon, Havana Club (7 years) and Glenfiddich (18 years).

These chocolates aren't cheap. A small box of 12 flavors, weighing 120 grams, costs 268 yuan.

Ye said they import only fresh Valrhona chocolate, produced within six months. Homemade chocolate with a minimum of 55 percent pure cocoa is made after an order is placed, and should be enjoyed as soon as possible.

Website: lotoscomehome.taobao.cn

Other places with quality chocolate recommended by Weiyang Ye

Debaube & Gallais

A well-known French brand boasts low sugar content and premium artisanal quality. Its cocoa content is 99 percent and sells at 150 yuan for 100 grams. However, due to long storage, some products are not as fresh as you'd hope.

Where: EB103, B1/F (near the skating rink), China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomen Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am - 9:30 pm
Tel: 6505 4836

Valrhona from Sinodis

Sinodis, an imported food and beverage company, has a Taobao store that sells 22 kinds of Valrhona packaged chocolate starting from 38 yuan for 30 grams.

Website: xndssp.tmall.com



The Noisette



Chocolate truffles



The Framboise



Icy herbal jelly, 5 yuan



Twice-cooked pork, 25 yuan

Photos by Zhou Baoling

Diner packs Sichuan experience

By Annie Wei

For those looking for a place that serves up delicious meals for less than 30 yuan, Zhang Mama Sichuan Restaurant is the place to go.

Hidden in a small hutong with limited seating, the restaurant is always packed.

The must-order dish is its spicy meat pot (48 yuan), with a choice of ribs, chicken or shrimp.

Every table orders boboji (1 or 2 yuan per screw), a traditional Sichuan snack that one can find in every eatery in the province. It's cooked vegetables on a stick. Select the vegetables you like and soak them in a bowl of spices and oil. After the vegetables have soaked up the flavor, it's ready to eat. Many Sichuan diners say the key is having the right amount of chili peppers, the most important element in Sichuan cuisine.

We tried the twice-cooked pork (25 yuan), which is usually boiled with pork belly, then sliced thin and stir-fried with leeks, sweet bean paste sauce and other seasonings. Here, it's made from thinly sliced pork that is deep-fried with leeks.

Crispy potato vermicelli with dry chili costs only 10 yuan, fish-fragrant eggplant is 12 yuan, kung pao chicken is 15 yuan, and very spicy liangfen, translucent noodle made of mung beans, is 7 yuan.

After so many spicy dishes, a bowl of bingfen (5 yuan) makes for the perfect dessert. The bingfen is highly recommended, made of herbal jelly, brown sugar and ice, topped with crushed fried peanuts, plums and sesame.

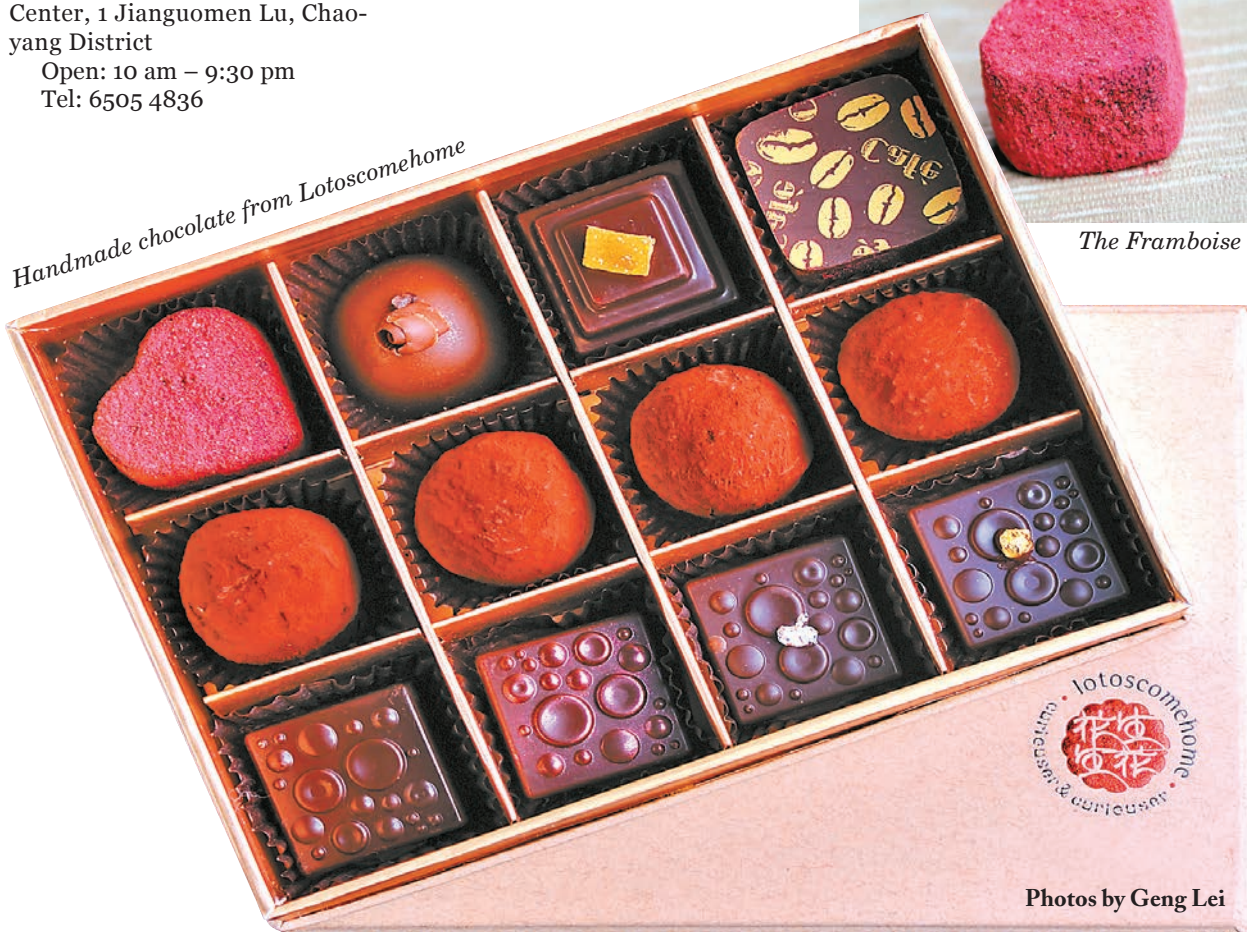
Be warned that most dishes are seasoned with a lot of salt and MSG.

The restaurant has become one of the most popular eateries in Dongcheng District. A diner from Sichuan said the flavor of the foods and ambiance was just like something he'd find back home.

Because the restaurant is overcrowded, service is slow and inattentive. It's worth it though. For those who don't want to wait for a table, it's advisable to go later during the evening.

Zhang Mama Sichuan Restaurant
Where: 5 Fensiting Hutong, Andingmen Nei Dajie, Dongcheng District
Open: 10 am - 11 pm

Handmade chocolate from Lotoscomehome



Photos by Geng Lei

Brand

FREYWILLE shows world of Klimt in new collection



Hope is a wish to avoid misfortune, fear and adversity. It is a prayer for the better; a positive vision in essence and purpose.

The feeling has inspired the artist Klimt throughout his golden phase. His celebrated painting *Hope II*, which captures the essence of one of man's most powerful emotions, inspired the new collection FREYWILLE.

Airline



Jetstar takes global wine award

Jetstar has become the first low-cost carrier to be recognized as having the Best Business Class White (Waipara Hills NZ, Sauvignon Blanc, 2010) at the prestigious Cellars in the Sky Awards held in London, UK.

Cellars in the Sky is an international competition organized by *Business Traveler* magazine, which rewards long-haul carriers for the quality of their wine and innovative offerings in 12 categories.

Jetstar's entries were assessed by a respected panel of judges who performed blind taste testings of wines from 33 airlines around the world.

Jetstar was also awarded second place for Best On-Board Business Class Cellar. Jetstar's parent airline Qantas scooped awards in six different categories.

Jetstar Group CEO Bruce Buchanan said Jetstar was honored to be the first low-cost airline recognized at the awards – a mantle normally reserved for full-service carriers.

South Africa Airways begins Beijing-Johannesburg flights

South Africa Airways celebrated the inaugural direct flight from Johannesburg on February 1 with a Gala Dinner at the Grand Millennium Beijing. The event was attended by South Africa Public Enterprises Deputy Minister Ben Dikobe Martins and Tourism Minister Martinus van Schalkwyk, as well as a number of African Ambassadors, including the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary H.E. Dr. B W J Langa from South Africa, and other dignitaries.

South Africa Airways will fly the direct route three times each week. The crew will stay at the Grand Millennium Beijing, their official hotel of choice.

Dining

Cafe Cha adds Indian zest

From February 18 to 29, spice up your meals at Café CHA, when Indian chef Mahendra Rathod will provide more than 30 Indian dishes to give guests a taste of authentic Indian specialties.

Chef Rathod will delight guests with traditional and innovative dishes, many of which are vegetarian, including Kadhai vegetables and lentils tadka, as well as classic options like butter chicken, vegetable tandoori and lamb rogan josh.

Rathod has 10 years of experience in preparing gourmet cuisine at prestigious hotels.

Where: Cafe Cha, Shangri-La Beijing, 29 Zizhuyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: February 18-29

Tel: 6841 2211 ext. 6715



Clay pot rice for winter at Lijingxuan

Guests are sure to agree that the clay pot rice, or bao zai fan, served at Lilingxuan Chinese restaurant is a true delight during this cold weather.

Clay pot rice is a traditional Cantonese dish which is slow-cooked to preserve the nutritional quality of the ingredients. To suit every guest's taste, Lijingxuan is serving many variations of the dish, including some with traditional assorted sausage and meat, assorted sausage with chicken and mushroom, as well as more innovative combinations like fresh abalone and chicken and cod and pickled vegetables.

Located on the third floor of Regent Beijing, Lijingxuan serves classic Cantonese cuisine and regional delights from Beijing and Sichuan. It was voted Best Cantonese Restaurant by Modern Weekly Best Restaurant Award 2008 and Best Cantonese Restaurant by Time Out Best Restaurant Award 2010.



The restaurant has 10 private rooms available for your dining party.

Where: Lijingxuan Chinese restaurant, Regent Beijing, 99 Jinbaojie, Dongcheng District

Hours: lunch 11:30 am – 2:30 pm; dinner 5:30-10:30 pm

Cost: 188 yuan per pot (feeds 3 to 5 persons)

Tel: 8522 1789

Rent

Modern apartment with floor heating

This south-facing, 70-square-meter apartment comes fully furnished for a cozy look. It has wooden floors with floor heating, 24-hour security, hot water, an elevator, a washing machine, air conditioning, a television, refrigerator and wireless Internet access.

Rent costs 4,500 yuan per month.

Tel: 18618415856

Email: hoholyly@163.com

1-bedroom apartment in Lido area

This is a spacious one-bedroom apartment with a kitchen and washroom. It comes with modern furnishing. The bright interior colors give it a cozy feeling.

It has convenient access to the area's gyms, bars, supermarkets, restaurants, parks and international schools, as well as to United Family Hospital. The Holiday Inn (Lido Hotel) is within walking distance. It is near the new US Embassy and the embassies of France, Japan and South Korea.

Tel: 13426085833

Email: ayufans_1983@163.com (By Jackie Zhang)

Wed, Feb. 22

Musical First Love

"I have found the secret to loving you, which is treating you as a first love." Thus goes a line from *First Love*, a story in which the heroine dies in an avalanche and returns to Earth to seek out her first love.

Creator Shi Hang and director Meng Jinghui want to express their opinions about passion and intimacy. "No one knows the result of first love, all we can do is keep it close to reality," Meng said.

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: Daily until February 25, 7:30-9:30 pm
Admission: 80-880 yuan
Tel: 8404 9981 / 6506 5343



Fri, Feb. 17

Salon Wudaokou calligraphy – open class

Teachers for this calligraphy course will speak about the traditional art's history and explain why the secret to beautiful writing lies as much in the hands as in the mind. Students will learn how to meditate using calligraphy and find tranquility from the noise of the city. Brushes, ink sticks, ink stones and paper will be provided. This is course designed for beginners.

Where: 905, 2 Qingjiayuan, Chengfu Lu, Haidian District
When: Every Friday until March 30, 6:30-8 pm
Cost: Free
Tel: 13671000095



Mon, Feb. 20

Exhibition Flower-and-Bird paintings of the Ming Dynasty

Flower-and-bird paintings are a sub-genre of Chinese art named for the subject matter. But such paintings can also include flowers, fish, insects, birds

– a wide cross-section of nature. The Ming Dynasty was the golden age for Chinese painting, with flower-and-bird paintings flourishing during that era. Fifty-three works have been selected for this special exhibition, reflecting the development of this genre.

Where: Yanxi Hall, The Imperial Palace, 4 Jingshan Qian Jie, Dongcheng District
When: Daily until March 5, 8:30 am – 5 pm
Admission: 40 yuan

Thu, Feb. 23



Exhibition Twilight of Imperial Peking through the lens of Heinz von Perckhammer

One hundred photos of Old Beijing, taken by German photographer Heinz von Perckhammer, are on display. The exhibition is divided into four parts to present the cultural landscape of Old Beijing in the 20th century, including palaces and gardens, streets, temples and everyday life. The script of Longxugou Ditch, one of the most famous dramas by Lao She, will be on display as well.

Where: Ancient Books Hall of the National Library of China, 7 Wenjin Jie, Xicheng District

When: Daily until February 28, 9 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 8854 5426 / 5360



Salon Patchwork

Patchwork is a form of needlework that involves sewing pieces of fabric into a larger design. The larger design is usually based on repeated patterns built up from different colored shapes. These shapes are carefully measured and cut, straight-edged, and feature basic geometric forms, making them easy to piece together. Patchwork requires patience, and experiencing

the process can be a great way to meditate. All tools and cloth will be provided.

Where: 2406 Shangdu SOHO, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: Daily until May 4, 10:30 am – 10 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 13488655984

Sat, Feb. 18



Exhibition Changing View Round Two – Ink and Wash Paintings

In the context of cultural diversity, the question of how to interpret contemporary Chinese ink and wash paintings has been a heated issue. The spirit of these traditional paintings originates from the love of nature in farming culture. Through depicting mountains, rivers, flowers, birds, fish and other wildlife, Chinese ink and wash paintings present a unique view of nature. It is under this influence that Chinese painting developed.

But this type of artistic language no longer applies today, when more people live in cities in China than rural villages. This disconnect has triggered changes in the artistic medium that brings uncertainty along with new possibilities.

This exhibition brings academic perspectives to the public and is intended to open the possibilities of a new form of expression for traditional ink and wash painting.

Where: D09-1, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: 3:30 pm (open), Daily until February 28, 10 am – 7 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6770 8966

Tue, Feb. 21

Sun, Feb. 19

Drama Farewell My Concubine

A classic of Peking Opera, *Farewell My Concubine* tells the story of Xiang Yu, the self-styled "Hegemon-King of Western Chu," who battled for the unification of China with Liu Bang, the eventual founder of the Han Dynasty. In the play, Xiang is surrounded by Liu's forces and, on the verge of total defeat, he calls forth his horse and begs it to run away for the sake of its own safety. The horse refuses, against his wishes. He then calls for the company of his favorite concubine, Consort Yu (Yuji). Realizing the dire situation that has befallen them, she begs to die alongside her master, but he strongly refuses this wish. Afterwards, as he is distracted, Yu commits suicide with Xiang's sword.

Where: Mei Lanfang Theater, 32 Ping'anli Xi Dajie, Xicheng District
When: 7:30-11:30 pm
Admission: 50-2,080 yuan
Tel: 6551 3349

(By Zhang Yuting)



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Next week

Editor: Zhang Dongya Designer: Zhao Yan

BEIJING TODAY

Climbing ice falls in the suburbs

By Zhang Dongya

Taoyuan Xiang, or Fairy Valley of Peach Blossom, in Miyun County is a famous scenic spot for its deep valleys with waterfalls, brooks and ponds. During the winter, it transforms into a wonderland of icefalls, attracting many ice climbers. As winter winds down, the next few weeks may be the last chance to catch these icefalls and perhaps give them a climb.

Located in Nanshicheng Village, Shicheng Town, Miyun County, the Fairy Valley of Peach Blossom Scenic Spot is 16 square kilometers of serried gorges, dense forests, magnificent mountains and numerous ponds, brooks and waterfalls.

During the winter, the lakes, ponds and waterfalls freeze. The rigid mountains become covered with thick layers of ice: some shimmer in the sun, while those in the shadows give off a light blue sheen.

The ice walls have become a place of interest for adventurous climbers – and novices, too. The ice walls are divided into different ranks so that both beginners and experienced climbers can safely scale up. Around the falls, visitors will see many amateur climbers with professional equipment.

Gao Guan and Liu Lifeng are two ice-climbing enthusiasts who visited Taoyuan last week. "To some extent, ice climbing is a team sport, requiring at least two people – one to climb and the other to support you," Gao said.

Gao explained how he fared in his last attempt. Equipped with helmet, ice axes, crampons and safety belt, he slowly pulled himself toward the top with Liu guiding him underneath. After a while, his arms felt heavy and he was exhausted, but Liu and others at the base shouted words of encouragement. Eventually he made it to the top.

"It's very important for you and your teammate to trust each other and cooperate," Gao said.

Fairy Valley of Peach Blossom

Getting there: Take Bus 980 or 987 from Dongzhimen Bus Station to Miyun Gulou and then taxi to the scenic spot. Or drive along Beijing-Chengde Expressway and exit from Miyun Toll Gate. Then drive along Miguan Lu to Taoyuan Xiang.

Admission: 45 yuan, 36 yuan for groups of at least 30

Tel: 6102 5309 / 5667

Note:

1. Ice climbing depends on weather conditions, so contact the scenic spot in advance to see if it is possible.
2. Get adequate equipment, including a helmet, ice axe, climbing boots, crampon and safety belt. Beginners are advised to consult a professional coach before climbing.



CFP Photos

Other destinations for ice climbing:

Yunmengxia Scenic Spot

Located in Shicheng Town, Miyun County, there are two ice walls here – one big and one small – both with natural ice. The big ice wall is about 100 meters high and very steep. The ice isn't too thick. It's best for experienced climbers with adequate equipment.

Tianxian Waterfall Scenic Spot

Located in Sihetang, Miyun County, Tianxian Waterfall has many icefalls suitable for different levels of climbers.

Mixian Waterfall is not steep, but it faces south, so it'll melt fast. Juxian Waterfall has a gentle slope, very suitable for beginners. Tianxian Waterfall is 80 meters high and 15 meters wide. Its left side has ice in great condition.

Heilong Pond

Located in Miyun County, this is a place for beginning climbers. Shuttle buses to the scenic spot depart from Dongzhimen on weekends.